

State of California  
The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF FLOOD MANAGEMENT

## Fact Sheet

# State-Federal Flood Operations Center

*(Internal DWR use only)*



June 2005  
Flood Operations Branch

**RECORDED RIVER AND FLOOD CONDITIONS MENU**  
**(800) 952-5530 (toll-free, 24-hour)**

Main Menu

Press 0 to transfer to staff (answering service after hours)

**Press 4 for recorded river & reservoir conditions & forecasts**

River & Reservoir Conditions Menu

Press 2 for Sacramento Valley and Northern Delta

Press 1 for Upper Sacramento River to Tisdale Weir

Press 2 for Lower Sacramento River (Fremont Weir to Rio Vista) Feather,  
Yuba, American Rivers, tributaries, Yolo Bypass

Press 3 for San Joaquin River Basin

Press 4 for Russian and Napa Rivers

Press 5 for North Coastal Rivers

Press 6 for Central Coast Rivers

Press 7 for Tulare Lake Basin

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## **Overview**

The mission of the Division of Flood Management is to prevent loss of life and reduce property damage caused by floods and to assist in recovery efforts following any natural disaster. The State-Federal Flood Operations Center (FOC) located in Sacramento, California is a component of the Division's Flood Operations Branch. Year-round the FOC is the focal point for the gathering, analysis, and dissemination of flood and water-related information. During emergencies the FOC provides a facility from which DWR can centrally coordinate emergency response.

## **River Forecasts**

As major storm systems approach California forecasters from the National Weather Service and Department of Water Resources forecast the location, amount, and timing of expected precipitation and make initial river forecasts. Once the storm arrives and runoff begins forecasts are updated and issued as necessary. Reservoir operators adjust flood control releases as inflows increase or downstream channels swell with runoff. If runoff is sufficient to raise streams to threatening levels the NWS and DWR issue these forecasts as official public bulletins. Automated NWS and DWR computer systems disseminate bulletins and FOC personnel make high water notification calls to selected agencies. Depending on the severity of forecasted or actual flooding DWR may declare a Flood Alert or Flood Mobilization.

## **High Water Notifications**

When streams are forecast to rise above certain pre-determined stages (water surface elevations) or flow rates FOC personnel make high water notification calls to appropriate local flood system maintaining and emergency response agencies. Maintaining agencies are required to patrol their levees on a 24-hour basis as long as the water level is at or above monitor stage and until no threat remains to the levees.

## **Flood Alert**

Forecasts of sustained storm patterns and resulting flood potentials, the need for coordinated field operations, or requests for technical support from local agencies may require the Flood Operations Branch Chief to declare a Flood Alert to officially activate the FOC under the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS). Flood Management personnel from the Flood Operations and Hydrology Office, the National Weather Service Sacramento Forecast Office, and when applicable the Information Services Branch of the Public Affairs Office, expand their regular duties to meet these needs. If additional personnel are needed they are first obtained from within the Division of Flood Management then from other areas of the Department.

## **Flood Mobilization**

Additional Department personnel, equipment, material, and financial resources may be needed for extended periods to respond to sustained severe storms and flooding. The Director may declare a Flood Mobilization to meet this need. The Division of Flood Management is authorized to use any Department personnel and expenditures beyond budgeted funding during a Flood Mobilization. Flood Alerts and Mobilizations are internal levels of response within the Department and are independent from local, State, or federal emergency declarations.

## **Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS)**

SEMS was developed by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services to provide an organizational framework and common "language" for emergency response in California. SEMS was based on the Incident Command System originally developed by fire agencies for managing wildfire response in the Western United States. SEMS improves mobilization, deployment, utilization, communication, tracking, and demobilization of needed mutual aid resources in an emergency. SEMS is organized into the following five functions at the FOC:

Management – directs all FOC activities, responsible for overall policy and coordination, coordinates requests for emergency assistance, personnel safety, and provides Public Information support.

Operations – coordinates with Incident Command Posts, Mobilization Centers, and other field operations units including flood fight, technical assistance and emergency repairs.

The Operations Section coordinates the dispatch of joint DWR / U.S. Army Corps of Engineers technical teams to investigate potential flood threats. If a flood fight is needed, flood fight Incident Commanders may be dispatched. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and the California Conservation Corps provide a majority of the crews.

Planning & Intelligence – collects, evaluates, documents and disseminates flood emergency information, prepares situation reports, incident reports, and action plans, provides primary interface with National Weather Service weather and river forecasting programs, and provides Decision Support System and Geographic Information System support.

Information includes river and weather conditions and forecasts, reservoir operations, situation reports, levee and other flood-related incident reports and maps.

Logistics – provides services, personnel, equipment and facilities in support of all operations, tracks personnel and equipment resources.

Finance & Administration – overall responsibility for accounting, time-keeping, recovery, and FEMA claims.

## **Flood Operations Center Information System**

The Flood Operations Center Information System (FOCIS) provides centralized databases to support the Department's SEMS-structured emergency operations and information / warning dissemination programs. FOCIS is accessed through a DWR Intranet website developed and maintained by the Flood Operations Branch.

The primary purpose of FOCIS is to automate and archive SEMS/ICS and other emergency operations reporting and tracking processes used at the FOC, Eureka Flood Center, and by other DWR Emergency Response and Incident Command Teams.

When linkage to the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) Response Information Management System (RIMS) is completed FOCIS will also provide the data exchange platform for disseminating critical and timely information to emergency coordinators and responders outside DWR through the RIMS system. Report transfer to RIMS will also fulfill the State agency status reporting requirements of SEMS.

## **California Data Exchange Center**

The California Data Exchange Center (CDEC) provides a centralized database to store, process, and exchange real-time hydrologic information gathered by various cooperators throughout the State. CDEC then disseminates this information to the cooperators, public and private agencies, news media, and the general public. The data collected by CDEC enables forecasters to prepare flood forecasts and water supply forecasts; reservoir and hydroelectric operators to schedule reservoir releases; water suppliers to anticipate water availability, and flood emergency personnel to prepare and disseminate flood hydrology data and reports.

CDEC formats and manages data for public use via the World Wide Web. This extensive website is accessed by flood emergency personnel, private and public agencies, news media, and the general public. Value added information is created from the data and presented in a variety of formats including maps, plots, charts and publications. The website is a tremendous tool in monitoring current flood conditions.

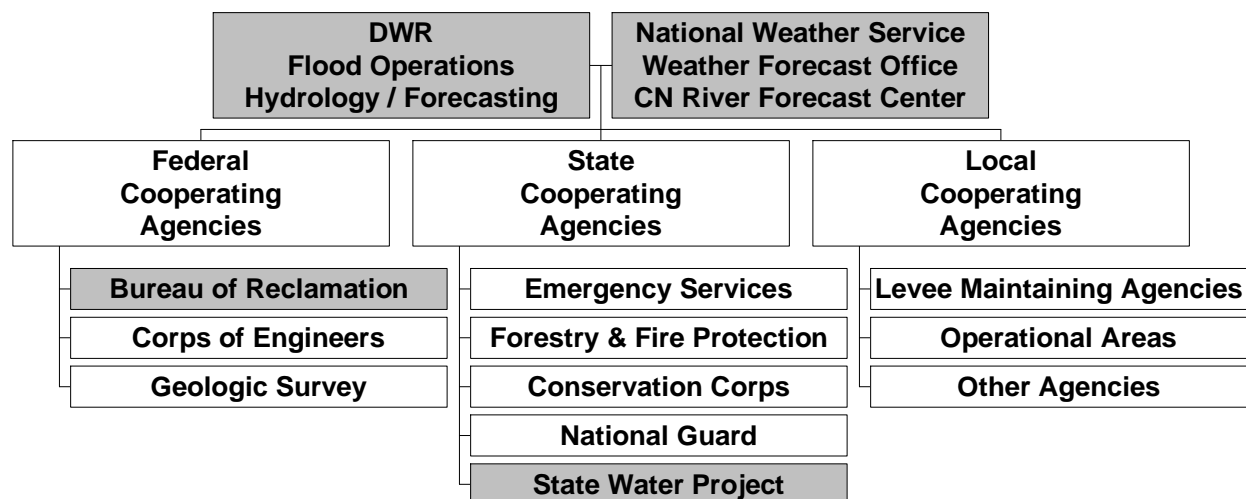
Real-time data is collected from remote data stations via the State microwave radio network and GOES satellite system. Real-time data includes river stages, precipitation, snow water content, temperature, water quality, and full weather data.

CDEC operates a data exchange program with various federal and State agencies and other public agencies. This data exchange program involves the automated transfer and receipt of data and information via network connections.

CDEC maintains and operates an extensive website that is accessed by flood emergency personnel, private and public agencies, news media, and the general public. The website provides the ability to display data in various ways: graphs, pictures, photos, maps, tabular, etc. The website is a tremendous tool in monitoring current flood conditions.

## Cooperating Agencies

In addition to the National Weather Service many agencies cooperate with DWR during flood emergencies and some send representatives to work at the FOC. The following figure provides an overview of federal, State, and local cooperating agencies with co-located agencies depicted by shaded boxes.



National Weather Service (NWS): – The mission of the NWS Hydrologic Services Program is to: (1) provide river and flood forecasts and warnings for the protection of lives and property, and (2) provide basic hydrologic forecast information for the nation’s environmental and economic well being. Eleven Weather Forecast Offices located in Medford (OR), Eureka, Reno and Las Vegas (NV), Sacramento, Monterey, Hanford, Oxnard, San Diego, Phoenix (AZ), and the California-Nevada River Forecast Center accomplish this. Both Sacramento offices are co-located with the FOC at the Joint Operations Center.

Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (OES) – coordinates the emergency activities of all State agencies. When requested by county Operational Areas, OES will direct (through the assignment of mission numbers) those State agency resources necessary to support flood fight operations. OES shall request, as directed by the Governor, a Presidential Emergency and/or a major disaster declaration. DWR representatives are dispatched as needed to OES’s Inland (Sacramento), Coastal (Oakland) and Southern (Los Alamitos) Regions, while OES representatives are assigned to the FOC.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) – CDF provides a majority of the crews used in flood fight activities. CDF also assists OES by setting up Mobilization Centers, mobile kitchens, and other facilities. CDF’s expertise in the Incident Command System is a valuable resource during flood emergencies.

California Conservation Corps (CCC) – the CCC provides personnel for flood fight crews and levee patrols during emergencies. Standby crews are frequently stationed near sites where problems are anticipated due to storm activity, high river stages, high tides or heavy reservoir releases.

California State Water Project (SWP): – The SWP Operations Center, located one floor above the FOC, participates in daily briefing and planning activities and coordinated reservoir operations with respect to Lake Oroville and other SWP facilities.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – In instances when the nature of the disaster exceeds the capabilities of State and local interests, the Corps may provide assistance under Public Law 84-99 to save human life, prevent immediate human suffering, or mitigate residential and commercial property damage. Assistance includes: acquisition of flood fight materials; geotechnical evaluation of levees and other flood operations structures, contracts for emergency flood fight and temporary repairs, clearance of drainage channels or blocked structures; technical assistance for development of plans; and upon request, inspection of non-Federal dams and flood control projects. The Corps also has jurisdiction over storage capacity seasonally reserved for flood control on most major reservoirs throughout the State.

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation – Although the Bureau of Reclamation is primarily involved in the irrigation and hydropower purposes of its federal water projects, many USBR reservoirs also provide flood control storage. In the Central Valley, these projects include Shasta Dam on the Sacramento River; Folsom Dam on the American River; New Melones Dam on the Stanislaus River, and Friant Dam on the San Joaquin River. The Central Valley Operations Office, located one floor above the FOC, participates in daily briefing and planning activities and coordinated reservoir operations.

U.S. Geologic Survey – The Survey participates in a flood emergency by measuring, processing and sharing streamflow data. The Survey cooperates with DWR and NWS in establishing and maintaining telemetered stream gages necessary for flood operations.

Levee Maintaining Agencies – Local agencies have primary authority for both maintenance of levees and flood fighting. Levee maintenance is provided by public levee districts, local government entities, private levee owners, and in some cases DWR. Collectively these agencies are referred to as Levee Maintaining Agencies or LMA's. Some levees are not maintained by private or public agencies.

Operational Areas – representatives from the Sacramento Operational Area (Sacramento County being the geographic boundary) may be assigned to the FOC when county streams and levees are threatened. The FOC provides intelligence and planning support to Operational Areas as needed throughout a flood emergency.

## Contacts

The Flood Operations Center provides a telephone bank of Flood Information Specialists to answer flood-related questions, assist with high water notification calls, and direct calls to other appropriate personnel. Media briefings and interviews are coordinated by Information Officers from the Public Affairs Office who augment Division of Flood Management staff. This information is available on request to other agencies, the media, and the public by telephone or via the California Data Exchange Center.

### State-Federal Flood Operations Center

Toll-free public lines .....	(800) 952-5530, recordings (menu on page 2) (24-hour emergency contact via answering service)
Media line.....	(916) 574-1735 (non-public)
Business line .....	(916) 574-2619
TDD service .....	(800) 900-3582
Gary Bardini, Hydrology and Flood Operations Office Chief .....	(916) 574-2612
Jay Punia, Flood Operations Branch Chief .....	(916) 574-2611
Kevin Elcock, Flood Operations Center Chief.....	(916) 547-2619
Jennifer Allen, Sherry Constancio, Gary Lemon, FOC Staff .....	(916) 574-2619
Eric Butler, Decision Support Systems Specialist (FOCIS).....	(916) 574-2638
Rick Burnett, Flood Fight Specialist .....	(916) 574-1203
Arthur Hinojosa, Hydrology Branch Chief .....	(916) 574-2613
Vacant, Forecasting Section Chief.....	(916) 574-2830
David Parker, CDEC Chief.....	(916) 574-2630
CDEC Help Desk .....	(916) 574-1777
Shared Email Address .....	flood_center@water.ca.gov

### DWR Websites

California Data Exchange Center (CDEC) .....	
DWR Intranet .....	<a href="http://cdec4gov.water.ca.gov">http://cdec4gov.water.ca.gov</a>
World Wide Web .....	<a href="http://cdec.water.ca.gov/">http://cdec.water.ca.gov/</a>
Flood Operations Center Information System (FOCIS) .....	
DWR Intranet .....	<a href="http://dwrfocus.water.ca.gov">http://dwrfocus.water.ca.gov</a>
World Wide Web .....	<a href="http://focus.water.ca.gov/">http://focus.water.ca.gov/</a>
Division of Flood Management .....	<a href="http://wwwdfm.water.ca.gov">http://wwwdfm.water.ca.gov</a>
Department of Water Resources .....	<a href="http://www.water.ca.gov">http://www.water.ca.gov</a>

### National Weather Service (Sacramento)

NWS Weather Forecast Office (public) .....	(916) 979-3051
NWS Weather Forecast Office (media) .....	(916) 979-3046
NWS Weather Forecast Office website .....	<a href="http://www.wr.noaa.gov/sto/">http://www.wr.noaa.gov/sto/</a>
Katherine Hoxsie, Warning Coordination Meteorologist .....	(916) 979-3041, x223
Email Address .....	kathryn.hoxsie@noaa.gov